

**Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission
Committee of the Whole
Wednesday January 14, 2015
Crown Roller Mill**

Unapproved Minutes

Commissioners Present: Denis Houle, Jeffrey Strand, Doron Clark, Eric Gustafson, Matthew Dobratz, Maleta Kimmons, David Zaffrann (by telephone), Carol Pass, Debra Behrens

Staff Present: David Rubedor, Robert Thompson, Howard Blin

The meeting was called to order by Jeff Strand 5:10 PM.

1. Approve Agenda

The agenda was approved.

2. Approve Minutes of September 10, 2014 Committee of the Whole Meeting

Motion Stand, Second Houle to approve the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Community Innovation Fund (CIF)

Zaffrann described the process followed by the CIF Committee to finalize the guidelines. Additional work will be necessary for the final request for proposals.

Comments and Questions:

- It was asked if there were provisions for spreading grants throughout the city. It was agreed that the evaluation criteria should include language regarding a desire to achieve geographic balance.
- The issue of whether projects should be replicable in other neighborhoods was discussed. There could be cases where innovative projects may not be replicable.
- It was agreed that the evaluation of applications should include whether the projects are sustainable after the grant funding is gone.

It was agreed by the Committee that the CIF Guidelines, with the changes noted, should be place on the January 27th NCEC agenda for approval.

4. City Council Charge on Neighborhood Funding

During the approval process for the 2015 Budget the City Council directed the NCR and NCEC to develop recommendations on allowable balances in neighborhood funding programs and for future expenditures of funding from the Consolidated Tax Increment Financing District.

Dobratz reported that the committee consisting of Commissioners Ishmael, Strand and himself have discussed a process for the recommendations and will meet in the near future.

5. Blueprint for Equitable Engagement

Rubedor described the process followed for the Blueprint to this point. This has included discussions of the Blueprint Working Group consisting of Commissioners Lewis, Gustafson and McKnight. He also stated that the Creative Citymaking effort would be utilized to have the assistance of artists to graphically present the ideas in the Blueprint. Comments on the document included the following:

- Training for neighborhoods is the key point. It was suggested that we look to CURA for assistance on training. Along with equity and inclusion, neighborhoods need to be effective in use of funding.
- Training should be emphasized, particularly on roles of board and staff and management of contracts.
- We should determine how the City Council perceives the effectiveness of neighborhoods.
- The role of the proposed neighborhood council needs to be clarified in respect to the duties of the NCEC and NRP Policy Board.
- There are concerns that the neighborhood council would add another layer of neighborhood oversight. This concern is diminished if the council concept is for an informal body.
- Care must be given in any neighborhood certification process. Rather than having various levels, such as silver, gold and platinum, a seal of approval approach should be used.
- In using incentives, use grant making to address City priorities, rather than generally expanding CPP funds.
- A concern was raised about loading neighborhoods with too much work, which is particularly difficult for all volunteer organizations. Incentives should be provided for neighborhoods to combine with other neighborhood organizations.
- Training in working on a non-profit board could be an incentive to offer people who join neighborhood boards.
- We should document how much additional funding is leveraged by the \$3.8 million in CPP funding.
- In developing the Blueprint, all that is currently being asked of neighborhood organizations should be considered.
- From the perspective of volunteers on neighborhood boards, the current format is visually challenging. The concept of a simpler graphic design is supported.

- A question was asked on the timing of timeline for the Blueprint and how does the NCEC's City Department Engagement Task Force fit in? It was noted that the Task Force has been on hiatus until the Blueprint is done, but it is ready to proceed.

It was agreed that staff would meet with Commissioners Gustafson, Lewis, McKnight and Clark prior to an update being provided to the City Council Health, Environment and Community Engagement Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 6:32 PM.

Submitted by Howard Blin